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JANUARY 30, 1829.

Read twice, and committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

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Mr. HAMILTON, from the Committee on Retrenchment, reported the following bill :

## A BILL

*To organize a board for the settlement of claims against the Government, to increase the duties of the Attorney General, and for other purposes.*

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives*  
2       *of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That*  
3       the Attorney General, the First Comptroller, and the four  
4       Auditors, be, and the same are hereby, constituted a board of  
5       appeal, to determine, in all cases, in which the parties may  
6       be dissatisfied with the future decisions of the regular ac-  
7       counting officers, and on all cases which may be referred to  
8       them from either House of Congress for their decision.

1       SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted, That a majority of*  
2       the board shall constitute a quorum to do business, at which  
3       the Attorney General, if present, and, if not, the Comptroller,  
4       or, in the absence of both, the senior Auditor, shall preside ;  
5       and they shall sit at such stated periods, and at such place,  
6       as the President shall direct, and shall keep a record of their  
7       proceedings, wherein shall be entered a concise statement of

the nature of the claims, with their proceedings thereon, and the reasons for the decisions that may be made; which decisions shall be final between the United States and the parties, unless the board shall see fit, from the magnitude of the claim, to refer it to Congress for its confirmation, or to review the same any time, within the period of three years, on a written application of the party or his representative, fully setting forth the reasons for the same, accompanied by an affidavit, also setting forth the discovery of new and material evidence in relation to the claim, all of which shall be entered of record, with the decision on such application.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That, in all cases of claims which cannot be audited and allowed, on account of informality, or from the loss of vouchers by inevitable accident, or because the claim rests on equitable considerations, the parties may make application to the board for an order to the proper accounting officer to audit the same, on the best proof the nature of the case admits, on equitable principles; but the claim shall not be allowed till reported to the board for their decision; which decision shall be final between the parties in all cases under five hundred dollars, but those above that sum shall, by the board, be reported to Congress at the next session, with their decision, and the reasons for the same, to be finally acted upon by Congress; but no quorum shall have power to act on cases of the above character,

15 unless the Attorney General or the Comptroller be one of  
16 them ; and in all such cases, the board shall keep a separate  
17 record of their proceedings.

1       SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That the President  
2 of the United States be, and he is hereby, authorized to trans-  
3 fer one of the clerks from the office of the Comptroller, or  
4 either of the Auditors, to act as clerk of the board.

1       SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted,* That the board may,  
2 from time to time, adopt such written rules and regulations  
3 to govern their proceedings as they see fit.

1       SEC. 6. *And be it further enacted,* That all the duties  
2 enjoined upon the officer of the Treasury Department, usual-  
3 ly called the Agent of the Treasury, designated by the Presi-  
4 dent of the United States, by and under the first section of the  
5 act, entitled "An act providing for the better organization of  
6 the Treasury Department," approved the fifteenth of May,  
7 one thousand eight hundred and twenty, shall be transferred  
8 to, and be performed by, the Attorney General of the United  
9 States, under such rules and regulations as he may, with the  
10 sanction of the President, from time to time prescribe: and  
11 the records, books, and papers of the present Agent of the  
12 Treasury, pertaining to said duties, together with the clerks  
13 having charge of the same, shall be transferred to the Office  
14 and Department of Law.

1        **SEC. 7. *And be it further enacted,*** That, to compensate  
2        the Attorney General for the discharge of the foregoing du-  
3        ties, in addition to those now required of him by law, he be  
4        allowed the annual salary of  
5        payable quarterly.